

MEETING REPORT

DATE OF MEETING: November 18, 1999

GROUP/SUBJECT: Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT)

PERSONS ATTENDING: Members: Chair Jon Kvistad, Ed Washington and David Bragdon, Metro Council; Kay Van Sickel, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT); Fred Hansen, Tri-Met; Sharron Kelley, Multnomah County; Roy Rogers, Washington County; Andy Ginsburg, Oregon DEQ; Mary Legry, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) (alternate); John A. Leuthauser, Cities in Multnomah County (alternate); Royce Pollard, City of Vancouver; Karl Rohde, Cities in Clackamas County; Charlie Hales, City of Portland; Rob Drake, Cities in Washington County; Mike Jordan, Clackamas County (alternate); Dean Lookingbill, Southwest Washington RTC; Dave Lohman, Port of Portland.

Guests: Presiding Officer Rod Monroe, Councilor Bill Atherton, Metro Council; John Russell, Oregon Transportation Commission; Lou Ogden, City of Tualatin (JPACT Cities in Washington County alternate); Dave Williams, ODOT; Bob Hart, RTC; Gary Katsion, Kittelson and Associates, Inc.; Kate Deane, ODOT; Beth Wemple, Kittelson & Associates; Lynn Peterson, 1000 Friends of Oregon; Bernie Bottomly, Tri-Met; Geoff Larkin, The Larkin Group, Inc.; Bob Post, BRW, Inc.; Karen Schilling, Multnomah County; Beckie Lee, Multnomah County; Tony Mendoza, Tri-Met; Ron Papsdorf, City of Gresham; Kathy Lehtola, Washington County; Tom Markgraf, Congressman Blumenauer's office; Jack Kloster, King City; Jim Howell, AORTA; Dick Feeney, Tri-Met; John Rist, Clackamas County; Rod Sandoz, Clackamas County; Ted Spence, citizen and TPAC member; Judy Edwards, Westside Transportation Alliance; Scott L. Rice, City of Cornelius; Douglas Klotz, Willamette Pedestrian Coalition; Steve Dotterrer, City of Portland; Jim Peterson, Multnomah Neighborhood Association; Jessica Hamilton, Representative David Wu's office; Michael W. Schaufler, City of Happy Valley and Cities in Clackamas County (alternate); Blair Crumpacker, Washington County; Andy Back, Washington County; Paul Silver, City of Wilsonville; Marc Zolton, City of Portland; Martha Bennett, City of Milwaukie; Ross Williams, Citizens for Sensible Transportation; Neil McFarlane, Tri-Met.

Media: Robert Schoenberg, Vancouver Business Journal.

Staff: Andy Cotugno, Richard Brandman, Tom Kloster, Mike Hogle, Randy Parker, John Cullerton, Gina Whitehill-Baziuk, Kim White, Rooney Barker.

SUMMARY:

The meeting was called to order and a quorum declared by Chair Jon Kvistad. A listing of the committee's schedule for 2000 was distributed.

MEETING REPORT:

The meeting report of the October 14, 1999, was unanimously APPROVED as submitted.

RESOLUTION NO. 99-2864 – FOR THE PURPOSE OF SELECTION AND FUNDING ALLOCATION OF \$1 MILLION TO TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS FOR FY 2000 TO FY 2003

Andy Cotugno referred the committee to the last page of the resolution being considered, labeled Exhibit 1, regarding which TMAs get funded and the funding schedule. (He also explained that WTA is Western Transportation Alliance.) He reminded the committee that this resolution follows through from a year ago on Resolution 98-2676 as far as providing that funding through 2003.

Fred Hansen, supporting the resolution, said he thinks it's important to recognize how valuable TMAs are and that new ones should be a priority. However, the program won't work if, for lack of a few additional dollars, some worthwhile existing TMAs are lost. Additional local funding needs to be found if TMAs are going to be successful.

Action taken: Mayor Drake moved, seconded by Fred Hansen, to recommend approval of Resolution No. 99-2864. The motion PASSED unanimously.

STATUS OF INTERSTATE MAX

Regarding the draft letter addressed to the Oregon Congressional Delegation distributed to the committee, Mr. Cotugno explained that JPACT needs to begin dealing with the priorities they're going to have by January 2000, and this letter would be timely in asking for federal funding support of the IMAX project.

Mr. Hansen added that final action has been taken on the financing package, the FEIS was completed at the end of October and published in the Federal Register on November 5th. He added that the FEIS is going through the final agency federal comment period and he would be surprised if something untoward came forward at this time. The Land Use Final Order (LUFO)

process was completed, and Tri-Met is working closely with Metro and Councilor Kvistad to accommodate the additional engineering study at the Expo location. He said the request for final design approval is now before the FTA. Mr. Hansen emphasized that receiving a Letter of No Prejudice is significant because monies spent now can match federal funds as they come in. He said this project needs to be included in the President's budget request, which will be published February 1, 2000, and he feels there is support for this project in D.C. at the highest levels.

Mr. Hansen continued to say that an incredible amount of successful work has been done by everyone involved (or even indirectly involved) on the IMAX project, and it looks to be in very good shape now but there are still a lot of steps to go.

Mr. Cotugno added that locally, all the approvals are done. It's now in the federal government's hands. Construction begins next year, so this needs to be in the President's requested budget. Now is the time to formally request that he put this in the budget. This letter is an essential step and he said that JPACT should make it clear to the Oregon delegation that this be in the President's budget.

Together with the draft letter to the Oregon Congressional Delegation is a memo to JPACT from Andy Cotugno regarding federal priorities. Mr. Cotugno explained that as the committee gets into agenda item #6, the federal priorities also need to make the timing of the President's budget. This second memo deals with a series of issues JPACT is interested in.

Roy Rogers, referring again to the Oregon Congressional Delegation letter, asked for clarification regarding the wording in the third paragraph, "The project is the region's top transportation priority for federal approvals and funding." He asked if that precludes commuter rail from being eligible for the federal new state monies.

Mr. Cotugno explained that this is a request for a funding contract with Tri-Met for IMAX. This does not preclude asking for other projects.

Mr. Rogers asked if the letter would preclude requesting less than \$25 million for commuter rail. Chair Kvistad reiterated that the letter deals only with this project, that there is no reason JPACT couldn't make another request. Mr. Rogers asked if there is a secondary project in the "new start" program, even if IMAX isn't fully funded, is this jeopardizing any other project. Mr. Hansen said in no way does this preclude our ability to ask for additional dollars, although if it's under \$25 million it would not be subject to the same requirements as the larger projects. There is no preclusion of that, but we're going to wrestle with that as a region. This doesn't preclude any other projects.

Mr. Rogers stated that if JPACT is not sending the right signals, it needs to understand that and talk about it before this letter is sent. Although he is very supportive of IMAX, he doesn't want JPACT to preclude other action for the future.

Mr. Hansen said this does not address those issues; that is what #6 on the agenda is about. This letter makes very clear that this is for IMAX only. This does not bias or preclude any other actions except to make clear that IMAX is the first priority.

Action taken: Mike Jordan moved to amend paragraph three as follows: The South/North Corridor is the region's top priority for high capacity transit service. Segment #1, the IMAX light rail project to the north, is the region's immediate transportation priority for federal approvals and funding. Mr. Jordan said he made this motion to maintain consistency with the agenda item #6 memo regarding federal priorities. He said IMAX is the top priority for the region in this cycle and that Clackamas County is fully supportive of it. The amending language was seconded by Karl Rohde.

Commissioner Hales wanted clarification as to what effect this amendment has. Dick Feeney of Tri-Met was asked to respond. Mr. Feeney said his preference would be to not change the letter. He said there's a clarity we want to give at this point, that it's most significant now if JPACT could get the entire congressional delegation from Oregon on this, that nuances, etc., might be confusing. There should be strong, unified support.

Commissioner Hales said that as a small western metropolitan area, we have done well in getting federal dollars for transportation projects we want. There are those we haven't gotten, but our record is good. It seems that clarity and focus are more important than ever. And timing. Councilor Bragdon said he also supported Mr. Feeney's statement not to change the letter.

Commissioner Rogers said he'd like to speak to Clackamas County's request, as well. He said this is difficult and the Oregon delegation works hard. Clackamas County indicates they need transit related projects in their area and JPACT voted support. Commissioner Rogers said this letter needs clarity, that it's important. JPACT has been solidified so it's been successful; we need to support one another. He believes JPACT needs to support Commissioner Jordan's amendment.

Councilor Monroe said he didn't hear any language in the amendment that takes away from unanimity, rather he thinks it shows clarity and joint support. He said it would be prudent for those from Multnomah County to approve the minor language change that doesn't change the thrust at all.

Commissioner Jordan, who also sits on MPAC, said it isn't about transportation any more, it's about land use. If we don't deal with this, 2040 is just a very nice plan. JPACT's message to the delegation is that over time these issues need to be taken care of and we will be back again and again and again. We realize you can only do what you can do. We failed and stumbled at the south end of the corridor. We want to let the delegation know we'll be back with the South Corridor.

Mary Legry responded that this is a question of timing, that it's important to have a single priority when talking to Congress. The subject is complicated enough without the amendment. The second memo, the one referring to agenda item #6, shows that projects are well delineated. She said the committee should stay with the original language and, knowing how Congress works, it's very important to have a single dynamic message.

Commissioner Rogers said he and the Clackamas County representative to the committee were not saying that IMAX is not the priority, but they don't want to preclude their projects. He said some of the members of that delegation aren't even represented in this room, so we need to unify and say IMAX is the priority, but we still want to be in that queue.

Mayor Drake said he wanted to support everything that's been said, but it's important that while there may be disagreement, it's all for one, one for all. Interest doesn't stop at a city or county border. Rather than being a negative, our representatives are very smart and understand that it's not going to stop at IMAX or at commuter rail. We're not stopping until we're done and we're not near being done. This is more a message of strength than weakness or illusion. He believes they understand the message and it gives them power. Collectively, he said, we march in the same direction.

Councilor Washington, saying he was receiving mixed messages, asked if there was any sense around the table that the projects of concern to Washington and Clackamas Counties are being precluded.

Mr. Hansen said both he and Dick Reiten feel that the South/North Corridor is tremendously critical. Mr. Hansen's concern is that if Clackamas County feels that this throws them asunder, he will support their additional language.

Commissioner Jordan said he was not concerned with Clackamas County being precluded, that they don't have a project ready to compete with IMAX. His biggest concern is that the committee try to put their year-to-year projects in a broader context.

1st Motion to Amend: Andy Ginsburg moved the following language, in lieu of Commissioner Jordan's proposed language, to make the paragraph in question clearly more specific to IMAX: "The project is within the region's highest priority corridor and is our top transportation priority for federal approvals and funding."

2nd Motion to Amend: Councilor Monroe moved to add "the South/North Corridor" to Mr. Ginsburg's motion. Mr. Ginsburg's motion was accepted by Commissioner Jordan and Councilor Rohde in lieu of their original motion and second. The motion PASSED unanimously.

OVERVIEW OF WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUTER RAIL

Richard Brandman spoke of transportation as it relates to issues of mobility and livability, and that two studies are underway to address these issues in Washington County. The Commuter Rail Project, which has completed preliminary work, is now in the alternatives analysis stage which will compare commuter rail to other transit improvements in the corridor. The Highway 217 Corridor Study, beginning in February, will look at the other side of the picture: freight, general purpose traffic improvements, high occupancy toll and vehicle lanes. Mr. Brandman then gave an overview of the regional freight network and opportunities associated with it. Although there's not much potential to mixing passenger service with freight service in the main line freight corridors, on the west side there are branch lines that are underutilized. Some tracks that are already on the ground can be used for commuter rail, but they'll need improvement. Mr. Brandman then explained the objectives of both the Commuter Rail and Highway 217 studies.

Bob Post of BRW, Inc., displayed the Corridor Map for commuter rail study from Wilsonville to Beaverton, a 15-mile line. The Washington County Commuter Rail Study Steering Committee, which was comprised of many jurisdictions, ODOT and Tri-Met, conducted two studies to look at the feasibility of commuter rail. They completed phase 1 in May 1997, to look at technical, regulatory and legal feasibility. The conclusion was that passenger service could be provided, although the track would require upgrading. The Study also looked quickly at ridership. Phase 2 was completed in April 1999, and that looked at operating costs, capital costs, and considerations for implementation. Station locations were looked at. They were determined to be Wilsonville, Tualatin, Tigard, the Washington Square area, Beaverton, and Merlo Road. The cars would be diesel multiple units (DMUs), which are like light rail vehicles, but run on diesel. Anticipated commuter rail travel time from Wilsonville to Beaverton would be 25 minutes, 31 minutes to Merlo. This is a highly competitive time during peak periods when compared to the automobile travel time.

Mr. Post went on to say that the ownership arrangement of the Corridor is complex, and that public ownership of the alignment would reduce operating costs and provide protection of the rail line. He said the Steering Committee looked at other operations, as well. The Executive Summary from the April 1999 report is also provided.

Commissioner Rogers said the train would alleviate I-5 and Highway 217 traffic, and help air quality in the region. This project would mirror these two major highways so there won't be a need for enhanced projects on them. Also, there are about 100 acres in the corridor that can be redeveloped. The average speed of the train will be 37 mph; top speed between stations could be 60 mph, and south of Tualatin, based on rail conditions, it could be 75 mph.

Mr. Post said the commuter rail wouldn't work without light rail, that the tie-in at Beaverton makes sense. On the Corridor map, it's revealed that the east-west freight line doesn't stop at Lake Oswego, it goes into southeast Portland. There's a rail trestle bridge over the Willamette that's underutilized that could be employed, and it goes on to the west. Also, the track doesn't

stop at Wilsonville, it goes to Salem and beyond. There's possible relief here for Salem also from I-5. This is of significant regional interest. Invitations are going out for a December 3rd train ride, which will stop at the various stations, and then will continue across the rail trestle into Clackamas County. Fred Hansen interjected that Tri-Met will have a bus at the end of the line, in Milwaukie, to pick people up.

Commissioner Rogers thanked ODOT, Metro and the Metro Councilors for the work they've put into this project, and added that none of it could have been done without Tri-Met.

Commissioner Hales said it would be good to revisit the mistakes that were made when building the light rail lines in order to avoid making them again on the commuter rail line. When the first light rail line was built, it was the light rail first and then the land use. He said he'd like to see how the land use planning is being done before the line is up and running.

Chair Kvistad and members of the committee thanked Mr. Post for his presentation.

INITIATION OF DISCUSSION ON FEDERAL FUNDING PRIORITIES

Referring to the memo on JPACT Federal Priorities distributed to the committee, Mr. Cotugno explained that JPACT needs to establish regional priorities for the Congressional delegation in January. He asked them for feedback at a later date. Chair Kvistad indicated it could be discussed at the next two meetings.

ODOT \$600 MILLION BOND PROGRAM

Kate Deane told the committee that in the list attached to her November 17, 1999, memo, the last project, Pacific Avenue and 12th in Hood River County, was not on the first list they reviewed. She went on to say this is still a 135 percent list. She said she will bring back a 100% list to the committee's December 9th meeting, and that the OTC will be adopting a list in January.

Councilor Rohde commented on an article in that morning's The Oregonian regarding the I-5/Highway 217 project, and noted that additional funding for this project is no longer on ODOT's project list. He said he understands that Clackamas and Washington County projects are a high priority for those jurisdictions, but that this is still an extremely important project. He stated that it should be included for consideration even if it meant trading something in order to stay at 135 percent, or simply adding it and bringing the list up to 150 percent. Councilor Rohde moved to add this project back onto the ODOT list.

Commissioner Rogers agreed that this project should be retained on the list, that everyone knows this intersection has problems. He said Highway 26 is also a major problem and has been on Washington County's priority list forever, and he expressed curiosity as to what happens to this list.

Chair Kvistad said JPACT can put anything they want on the list but with the understanding that the amount of dollars will be pared down. Hard choices will have to be made down the road.

Commissioner Rogers asked who would make the choices on the cut list. Kay Van Sickle responded that the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) will make the ultimate decision in January. She said if JPACT would submit a whole list, the OTC's job would be easier. The 135 percent list, she said, is what came out of the public meetings as the priorities. These projects listed here today received the greatest number of comments.

Mr. Hansen said he's been concerned all along about sending the 135 percent list to the OTC, that it gives away JPACT's decision making. He thought the committee ought not to do that, but 135 percent is better than 150 percent. He said he'd be more interested in the idea that any motions to add a project have to have an offset, as this will establish some priorities.

Commissioner Jordan reminded the group that they had just discussed focus and their communication to another level of government. He said the OTC is going to have a tough decision, and that it's also going to be tough to pare this list down. He agreed with Fred Hansen regarding offsets and said JPACT needs to stay as focused as they can as a region.

Councilor Washington asked if the reference to transferring projects to the local jurisdictions from the state would happen before or after the work is completed. Commissioner Hales responded that it would take place after, and that ODOT's been wanting the locals to take them for years.

Commissioner Kelley suggested 1) the committee might want to keep the list at 135 percent since it gives preliminary estimates, and since it's not clear what the actual costs are; 2) readiness issues may cause projects to slip; 3) no one is sure the money is going to be there anyway; and 4) this needs to be thought of as political. The public would be supportive if their projects were on the list rather than not.

Councilor Rohde said the I-5/Highway 217 project is far along in its design phase; that this is the second busiest intersection in the state and it needs to be addressed. The list can be debated. Clearly, he said, this project was only removed from the list because there weren't enough comments. Councilor Rohde said this has been a hasty process; these meetings were sparsely attended except when Clackamas County residents came thinking that light rail was being discussed. There are major problems there. ODOT always acknowledged that this project needed to be done in full. This also affects our international trade corridor. Commissioner Rogers seconded Councilor Rohde's motion to add this project back onto ODOT's list.

Councilor Monroe cautioned the committee to pick high profile projects that people understand or money won't be allocated for them. Voters need to be aware of the problems and Highway 217 is one of them. Also, referring to who pares the list down to 100, he said he'd rather see JPACT do it as a regional entity than ODOT, that JPACT could do a better job of it.

Mayor Ogden added that there is no question that the I-5/Highway 217 project is one of the longest standing projects with the highest profile on the list. What's not clear, he said, is what the impact of Phase 2 of the project is relative to what will be accomplished by Phase 1. He asked if Phase 2 isn't done and everything stays as it is today, does the project stay at the top of the list. If Phase 1 provides some ease and relief, then he questioned the value of Phase 2. Kay Van Sickel explained that while Phase 1 addresses the back-up of I-5 North trying to get onto Highway 217 North, Phase 2 is to address other movements, including Highway 217 access toward Washington Square and the southbound freeway connection from Highway 217 to I-5.

Mayor Drake stated that he would vote to include the project but when it gets down to working on the list, there will have to be a very strong case to keep it. Chair Kvistad agreed that there had been a cursory discussion and recommended a work session.

Action taken: In calling for the question on the motion to add Phase 2 of the I-5/Highway 217 project back onto the ODOT Projects Proposed for Bonding list, the motion PASSED.

Committee members in favor: Chair Kvistad, Mayor Drake, Councilor Rohde, Mayor Pollard, Mr. Dave Lohman, Councilor Washington, Commissioner Rogers. Committee members opposed: Commissioner Jordan, Commissioner Hales, Ms. Mary Legry, Councilor Bragdon. The remaining members abstained.

It was determined that the regularly scheduled December 9th meeting of the committee would be a work session on the RTP. Chair Kvistad asked the membership to please plan to attend until 11:00 a.m.

Mr. Cotugno informed the committee that the RTP calendar called for adoption in December and made reference to the green JPACT Discussion Issues paper showing the revised dates, the recommendations, suggestions, funding, etc. Chair Kvistad said he would like to have the RTP completed by the end of the calendar year. It's been a huge amount of work but with TPAC having extra workshop meetings and getting their information out to the JPACT members, it's very close to be completed. He said he would like JPACT to use the December 9th work session meeting to make their decisions and move it forward to the Metro Council. The committee agreed to schedule the December 9th meeting from 7:30 to 11:00 a.m.

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Rooney Barker
Recording Secretary